THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No requests have been received in the Ministry of Defence for an independent enquiry into the lapses in the Kargil War. However, the following developments have taken place:—

(i) On 29th July, 1999 the Government constituted the Kargil Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. K. Subrahmanyam. The terms of reference of the Committee were (a) to review the events leading upto the Pakistani aggression in the Kargil District of Ladakh in Jammu & Kashmir, and (b) to recommend such measures as are considered necessary to safeguard national security against such armed intrusions.

(ii) The Comptroller & Auditor General reviewed the procurement for Op Vijay (Army) in its Report 7A of 2001, which was presented in the Lok Sabha on 11th December, 2001 and laid in the Rajya Sabha on the same day.

(iii) In addition, a writ has been filed in the Supreme Court on 15th June, 2004 with the prayer that Secretary, Ministry of Defence conduct an inquiry and fix the responsibilities of persons, including officials of Ministry of Defence/Armed Forces responsible for inaction and causing losses to the country in purchasing arms/ammunition and other equipments during Op Vijay.

(b) Action Taken Notes (ATNs) are being sent to the Comptroller & Auditor General of India on the paragraphs mentioned in the Report of No. 7Aof 2001. The Public Accounts Committee has also taken up the Report of the Comptroller & Auditor General for detailed examination. The recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee have been incorporated in the report of the Group of Ministers.

Purchase of arms from an overseas company

1493. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

'(a) whether it is a fact that a huge quantity of rifles and other weapons were purchased for the Indian Army from an overseas company recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the source of supply, the quality of the weapon and their price, leave much to be desired; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and whether the deal is proposed to be reviewed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) During the year 2004-2005, no contract for any rifle or weapon has been signed with any vendor so far. However, in the year 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, Indian Army have procured various rifles and weapons from vendors in Russia, South Africa, Israel and Sweden after trial evaluations.

(c) The source of supply, quality of weapons and their prices are satisfactory.

(d) Does not arise.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

1494. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has built up its own unmanned defence system like unmanned aerial vehicles and unmanned underwater vehicles so that our country gets closer to building up its own assemble of unmanned defence;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, by when such system is likely to be developed in the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. DRDO has developed two types of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles — Lakshya & Nishant. Development of Underwater autonomous vehicle has not been undertaken.

(b) The reusable Unmanned Aerial Target Vehicle Lakshya is used for training gun and missile crew. Nishant is used for battle field reconnaissance and damage assessment.

(c) Development work on underwater autonomous vehicles is planned to be undertaken by March 2005.